



Songs o' the Sound



Songs o' the Gound

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"And heeds not any hall of hurrying feet
Before his outspread mats and hushful bosoms."
THE SIWASH.

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Wilt Thou Not Sing

WILT thou not sing, my Muse, sing soft to me,
Some haunting song of love in minor key?

In subtler strain than hath been heretofore

Sung through the ages of the poet's lore
Of charmed nights and prisoned hearts set free,

Sing the soul's song as sings the sun-drawn bee;

Sing as the dryad in the sheathed tree;

Sing as the ocean to the listening shore—

Wilt thou not sing?

Then will my heart uplift as doth the sea

When Luna draws it with her mystery:

To know thou canst, like skylark, swiftly soar

And show'st thy music in divine outpour—

O Muse of mine, give me this ecstasy!

Wilt thou not sing?

❀ The Siwash

STOLID he sits, the Siwash of the Sound,
Hard by the corner of the city's street
And heeds not any halt of hurrying feet
Before his outspread mats and baskets browned
And crude—yet curious, patterned weaves abound
That make his tribal art unique, complete;
And if you turn to go, no tones entreat,
And if you buy, he sells in calm profound.

The hustling white men look with fullest scorn
Upon the unkempt wanderers, silent, grave;

And few there are who pause to meditate

Or pity give the Indians who are born

To learn their day is past. Why speak? Why slave? —

The Siwash struggles not against his fate!

In Friendship's Guise

To the Seattle Writers Club

I THOUGHT them friends, when, journeying on life's way
I fell among them in a crowded place
Nor hoped to see a kindly, smiling face
Among the throng that passed by night and day.
Yet while I stood, aloof, forlorn, a gay
Salute was given. Another, with much grace
Begged that I quaff from friendship's golden vase
The wine of life—and each one bade me stay.

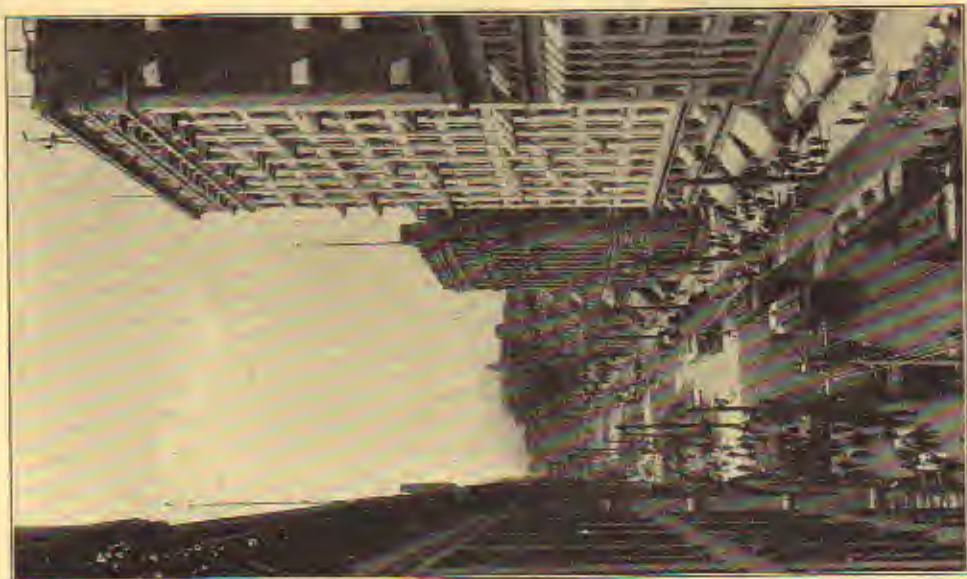
And now bereft am I! Not one, but all
Connived to rob—conspired in friendship's guise.
So deftly did each comrade play his part
I could not one, with surety, 'fore a justice haul
And say: "This is the one!" What was their prize?
They stole—these friendly ones—they stole my heart!

The Winepress

If crushed must be each ardent hope of mine,
Make from them, Lord, Christ's sacramental wine!

IN OLD, old book one day was put on sale:
 Bound in dead white, clasped with a seal of ice;
 And, as 't was writ in unknown script, the price
 Was thought too high, for none could read the tale,
 To buy or not to buy? Which would prevail?
 Since bought (to make my metaphor concise),
 The search has been, oft with life's sacrifice,
 To find its cryptic key—to no avail.

For years, long years, men turned the pages o'er
 And hoped to solve Alaska's mystery.
 Now have they found what wise men had foretold:
 A word more potent than Magician's lore;
 A word unlocking worlds, O magic key!—
 On every page and line shines gold, gold, gold!



"None here lived who . . .
Decided that hillside trails the wild deep forest
Were of wide thoroughfare the foremen."
—SEATTLE.

Seattle

DENSE, dense, through countless years, the forest grew,—
Cedar and maple, mountain ash and fir,—
And none there lived who were interpreters
Of what it whispered as the night winds blew,
Or dreamed that hillside trails the wild deer knew
Were of wide thoroughfares the forerunners,
And ne'er upon the Sound came voyagers
In bark more large than the Siwash canoe.

Behold! Where moaned the trees their coming fate,
A spreading city lies 'twixt lake and sea.

Where hunter followed game tracks dank and dim,
Commerce and culture touch glass rim to rim.
Where Indian fished, lie world-ships filled with freight—
Seattle, splendid, sired by Destiny!

The Point of View

A Monologue

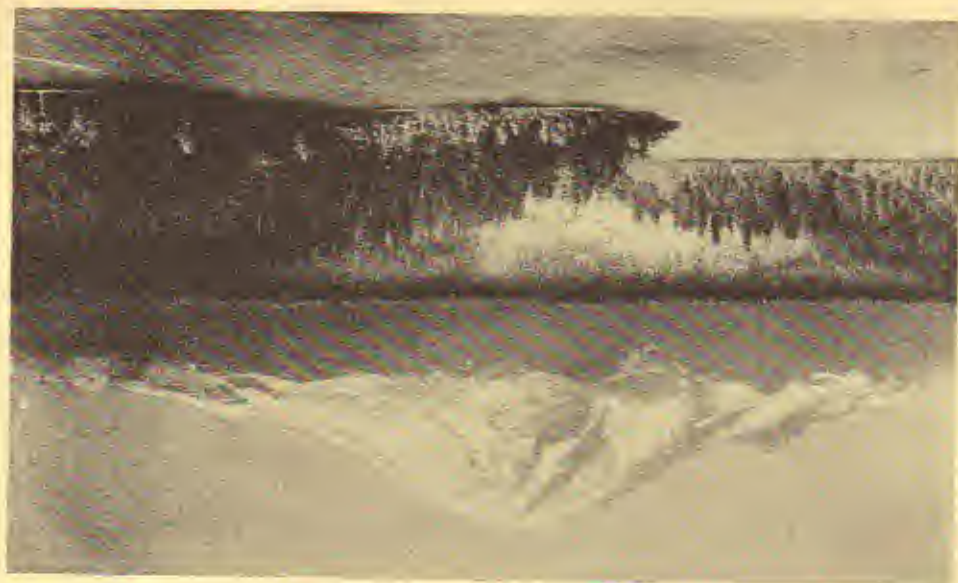
Sight

THE great high plains they weary me,
They eerie be, they dreary be.
The distances seem boundless, far
From verge to verge as star from star,
The silences weight me with fright
(Oh lonely day! more lonely night!);
The winds that sweep the grassy sea
Sound dismal to the last degree:
I gaze and find—vacuity!

Insight

The great high plains are dear to me,
Sincere to me, are near to me.
The solitudes hold peace intense,
A thousand flow'ts breathe sweet incense,
The silences sing nature's run,
The morning stars pulse into noon.
The sky-rimmed range soothes world-sick me,
I thank my God I've lived to see
Intensity, Immensity!

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE SOUND



❀ The Mountain of the Sound

HLL day the soft, thick fog-bank hid from view

The hoary, massive Mountain of the Sound,

The while the bustling city's ceaseless round

Of toil and hopes and fears (as hours flew)

Went on. And none thought if the sky were blue

Or gray; or, far from din, peace could be found

And nooks where wild anemones abound,

And silences where man could faith renew.

And then came night,—soft-sailing, lovely night!

And as she came, a wind, o'er lapping tide,

Joined with the sinking sun and lol the Slope

Of Splendor dazzled forth, a symbol bright

To uplift downcast souls; and, close beside,

Shone clear an evening star—a star of Hope!

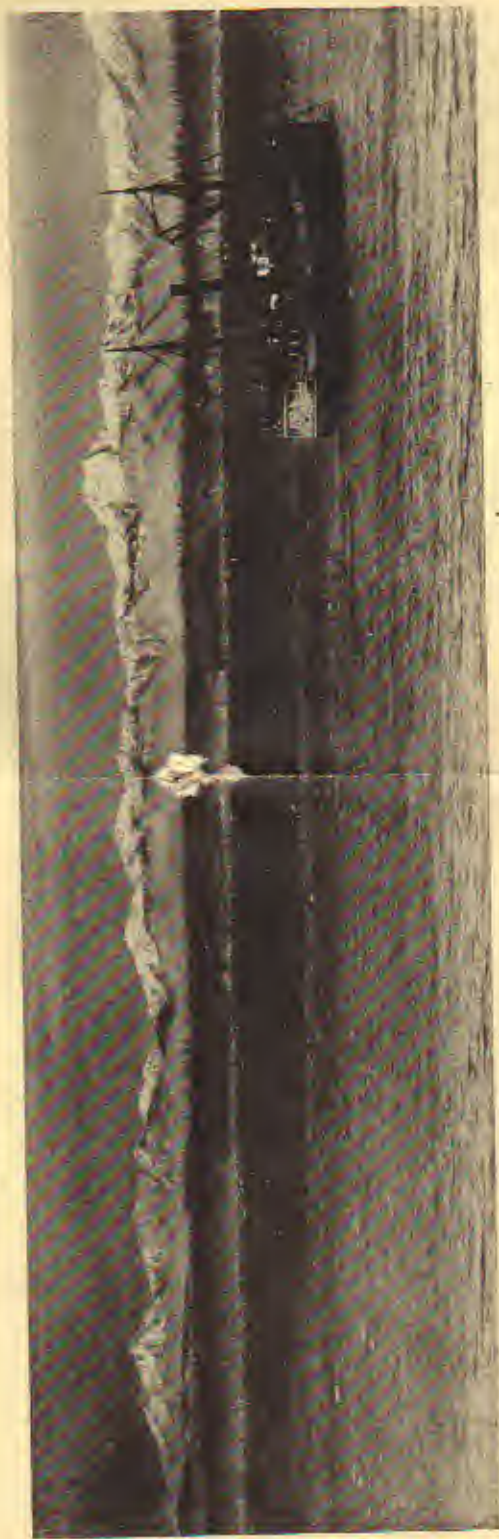
Abandoned Claims

DEAR, yawning caves! On many a mountain ride
We pass abandoned claims where eager hope
Has dug and delved and mined with windlass, rope
And mighty dynamite—yea, even died
As day by day the luring task was tried
And tunnels run far in, and winze and stope
All timbered, in the candles' flare, to ope
The treasure-house men thought they'd find inside.

Goes out my heart to them,—these men unknown
Who worked for years for naught. With heaven-high aims
I, too, seek gold,—not from the earth, wide-sown
With veins of ore, but in myself. When Fame's
Assay is made what values will be shown—
Dear God! Will mine, then, be abandoned claims?



"Ships that go down in the sea."



Sailing By

SAILING by! Sailing by!
Ships that go down to the sea.

Low in the water and laden with freight,

Pilot aboard and a sturdy mate;

Sailing by under leaden sky

Ships that go down to the sea.

Sailing by! Sailing by!

Souls that go down to the sea.

Heavy with sorrow and burdened with pain,

Sighs for the wind and a teary rain;

Sailing by under leaden sky

Ships that go down to the sea.

Sailing By

Sailing by! Sailing by!

Ships that go down to the sea.

Into the sunset all flaming with gold,

Soul-ships a-sailing with hopes untold;

Sailing by under sunset sky

Ships that go down to the sea.

Sailing by! Sailing by!

Ships that go down to the sea.

Dangers are over and tempests are past,

Into God's harbor—O sale at last!

Sailing by to the Home on High,

Ships that go down to the sea.

❖ The Alaskan's Dream

WHAT'S that you want—An interview?

Luck was agin me frum the fust
An' Christmas eve m' heart nigh bust
Thinkin' o' home without no tree,
Ner toys, ner food ner—well, no *me!*
(Ye see the kids thought lots o' dad;
An' wife she'd say I wa'n't s' bad).

I'd dug an' dug the frozen ground
But nary a nugget had I found.
Then I gin up; laid down to die,
Fer scurvy had me, hip an' thigh.

Wasn't I hungry? Yes, you *bet!*
I haint begun to git filled, yet!
An' so I dreamed o' Christmas stuff,
O' fillin' fixin's, an plum duff;
But wust of all a turkey browned
Wouldn't stay putt—flew to the ground
Without no wings ner feet ner head
(Ye c'n imagine what I sed!):
I got s' bilin' mad at last
I hit 'im one jes' as he passed—

An' I woke up a-strikin' out
With my ol' pick—Did ye say shout?
Ye bet I did! The gold was there—
You've interviewed a millionaire.

Dreams air queer things! Now ain't that true?

When Robins Come

HAND here they are! The robins come a-flying,
The redbreasts that we've loved this many a year;
The welcome sight puts end to longing, sighing,
For lo! the winter's past, and spring is here!

And O! How gay the red on robin gleaming;
A flash of light—a sudden song—a start
Of joy to feel that every bird-note's teeming
With love's delight that's echoed in the heart.

And yet—the sign is sure!—we hear them calling;
They call at dusk—the robins call for rain;
Their plaint brings mem'ries deep while twilight's falling,
And then—a sudden splash on window-pane.

But tears and rain are April showers fleeting;
Smiles come as smiles the sun on field and fen.
The robins mate—how fast the heart is beating,
For when they mate my lover comes again!



"Far from the hands of men."
—THE TINDER CRUISER.

The Timber Cruiser

NEAR from the haunts of men I take my way
With shouldered pack, and trusty axe in hand.
The Spirit of the Forest gives command
To one pave-sick, and gladly I obey,
A thousand breezes, aromatic, stray
Where cedars, pines and hemlocks, green-crowned, stand;
And memories stir as hoary trees are scanned,
For spirit winds my psychic senses away.

Within these darkling depths I hear a call
And Commerce fades, for faintly down the wind
A voice assails my ear as long ago.
Once more a weeping Ariel, tree-enthralled,
Begs for release, by hoop-bent witch confined—
Not Timber Cruiser I; but Prospero!

¶ In the Hop Fields

THE golden, sickle moon slips down the west,
But I, of all the pickers, find no rest
While blossomed, feath'ry sprays of hops entwine
And wave from fragrant-bannered, trellised vine.
Down aises o' pale green
Look I, through leaf-screen;
Watch I, obedient to the night's behest.

A wanderer I! Why 'gainst the world enveigh?
(Oh, drowsy-odored night, regrets allay!)
Why should aught else but husks to me be thrown?
A man shall reap what he, himself, has sown—

Down aises o' pale green
Faint flush o' rose seen
Foretells, with paling stars, the coming day.

¶ Below the Dead Line

RAMSHACKLE houses;
Ramshackle lives;
Who-so takes toll from them
At sin connives.

Country Roads

LONG, beaten stretches that man's needs have made,
The country roads zig-zag past vale, up hill.

At times a dusty path; sometimes by rill
Where rustic bridge is dappled with elm-shade,
And moonlight lances glint on man and maid
Whispering their love that's echoed by the trill
And haunting sweetness of the whip-o'-will
Pouring from bursting heart Love's Serenade.

Ah! Memory's mirror shows a country road
Where pass and repass thoughts of long ago:
Of hay-racks piled; of whistling lads; of long
Processions winding to the dead's abode;
Of summer noons; of winter's glist'ning snow;
Of One—O! softly sounds Love's Old, Sweet Song!



"My heart cries out for you."
—THE ALASKA WIDOW.

The Alaska Widow

HOVE: can you feel how ceaselessly my heart
Cries out for you as yours for me, I know,—
I, safe at home; you, in Alaska's snow?
At every shrill-voiced news-boy's cry I start
Fearing—I know not what! And closed eyes smart
With tears unshed. The wealth you would bestow
I pay for, dearest, in the hours slow
Which I endure while we are far apart."

A woman's cry, however much of truth
She hides from those too prone to gibes and sneers,
The North, like Shylock, for each ounce of gold
Demands from debtors toll of strength and youth;
Then, not content, nor yet to be cajoled
Exacts as usury a woman's tears!

The Tempest

Kinnear Park

WILD waves and wilder sky,
And wilder yet these four tall swaying firs
Tossing their storm-wrenched branches eerily
As might some weird, uncanny sorcerers
Who would the storm defy.

Wild waves and wilder sky,
And wilder yet the tempest in my heart
That torments, tortures, tears, tumultuously,
And ever will while we two walk apart—
Would I might love defy!

Christmas on the Sound

HBLUE, blue sky; a dash of mist,
A glimpse of Rainier, top sun-kissed.
A snow-capped range; a sparkling bay;
A growing city, glorious, gay—

*We pity those who in their folly
Live where grows not the Christmas holly,*

And Yuletide lovers? Bless their hearts!
Christmas Spirit zest imparts.
This maid's soft cheek with roses bloom,
For Someone's entering the room—

*We pity maids who in their folly
Hang not the mistletoe and holly,*

"Peace, peace on earth, good will to men,"
Her song has a new meaning when
She stands beneath the mistletoe—
Unconscious? Well, we only know

*We envy them their—no, not folly!
Kissing 'neath mistletoe and holly!*

His Last Cigar

THANKS! Yes, a light. You're doing the right
Thing, sure. Sleep well? Oh, fair. The night
Seemed long . . . at times . . . and then . . . 'twas short.
(Here comes the preacher to exhort!
Tell him to go. I will not say
That I repent . . . it's not my way!)

Say! Can't I be alone a bit?
Against the rules? Well, what of it?
You've stretched 'em once or twice before;
Be a good fellow . . . just once more!

God! But it's good to be alone:
To smoke . . . and dream . . . as I lie prone
And watch the rings I make displace
The one before . . . each frames a face!
Her face! Frail, frightened, fair
As when she hung on me to tear
Us two apart—to intercede.
But man's a savage . . . takes no heed . . .
And kills what's robbed him of his mate . . .

What's that you say? Five-forty-eight?

When the clock strikes I shall be far
From love . . . from hate . . . my last cigar!

The Bashful Coon

DAR'S Miss Ann Eliza
 Settin' neath de trees,
 She's de one I's wantin',—
 O but she's a tease!
 I's a-gwin' to ask her
 ('F I kin git de san')
 'F she'll on'y le' me hol'
 Her li'l black han'.

*Sure, I's gwin' to ask her
 ('F I kin git de san')*
'F she'll on'y le' me hol'

*Her han', han', han' fer jes' a li'l minute,
 Fer a lifeline, too;
 She'll not jin' annoder man so true, true, true.*

O Miss Ann Eliza!
 Come an' walk wid me
 Trough de fragran' meado'
 To de trysin' tree.
 W'y is I all trembly?

(Aside) (I ain't got no san!)
 'Cas ye leched m' shoulder wid
 Y'er li'l black han'!

¶ The Bashful Coon

Continued

*I's a-gwin' to ask her
(F' I kin git de san')
'F she'll on'y le' me hol'
Her han', han', han' fer jes' a li'l minute,
Fer a lifetime, too;
She'll not fin' another man so true, true, true,*

*O Miss Ann Elizy!
How yer eyes do shine,
Laik de firelies dancin'—
Would dat you were mine!
Yes, I's gwin' to say it
(I's got heaps o' san'!)
'Til death parts, oh, le' me hol'
Yer li'l black han'!*

*Now I's up an' ask her
(It took heaps o' san'!)
An' she's gwin' to le' me hol'
Her han', han', han' fer jes' a li'l minute,
Fer a lifetime, too;
Call But we is happy as we coo, coo, coo!*

A Wee, Wild Flower

A WEE, wild flower, uplifting winsome face
Upon a wind-blown crag, whose fretted base
Was wet with white-foamed, flying spray
Of eager river, hurrying on its way
To unknown shores, brought calm as by God's grace
To one who almost crushed, with heartsick pace
And eyes far-gazed (all hopeless to efface
The river's luring call by night and day) —

A wee, wild flower.

Its sweet content to live in lonely place

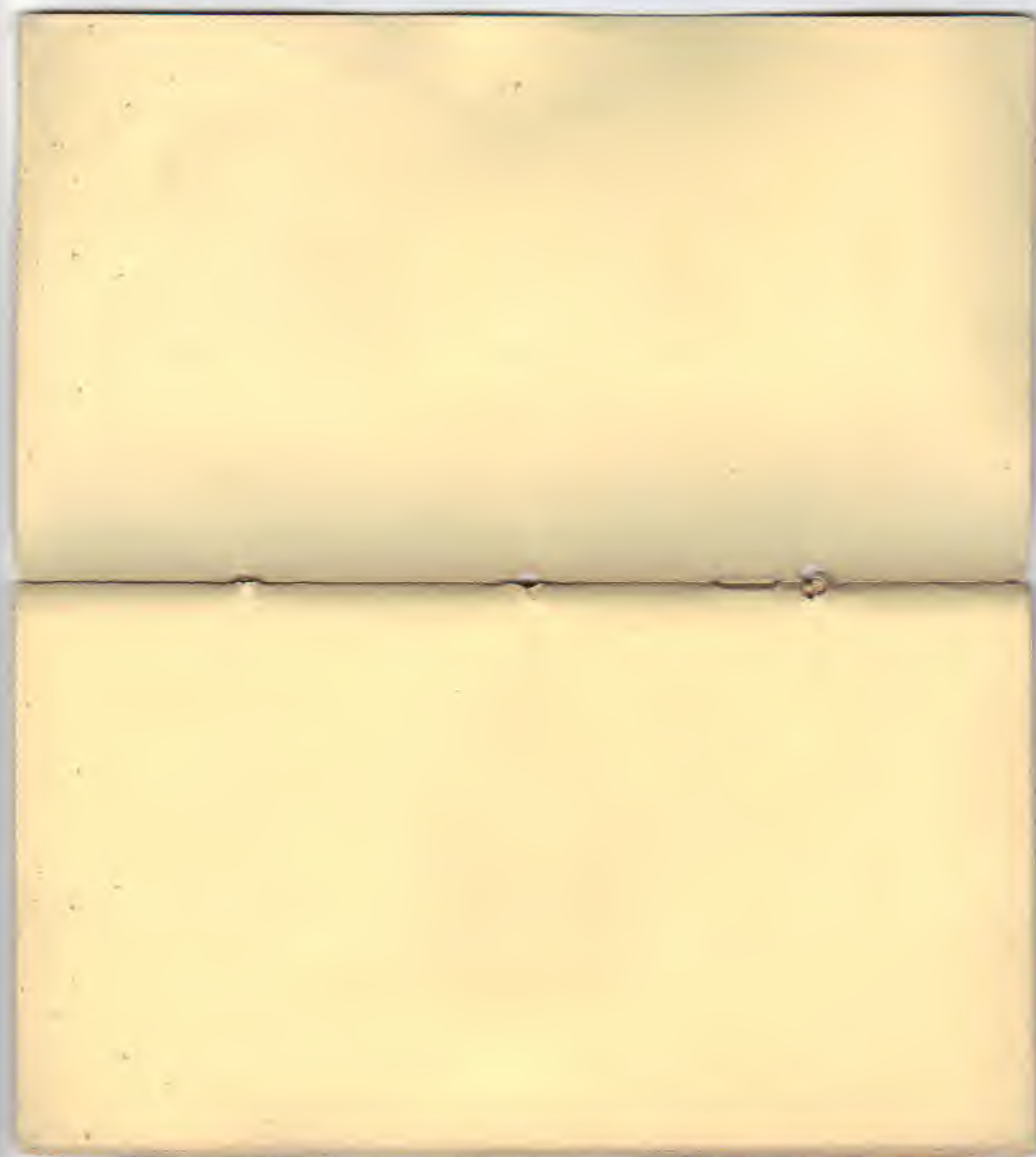
Soothed, as it bloomed nor cared for human race.

"Watch rivers madly rush," it seemed to say,

"To new delights; peace is for those who slay;

Nor long to blossom in some other space,

A wee, wild flower."



HERE endeth the *Book of Songs o' the Sound*, by
Alice Harriman, as 'Done into Print by Harry S. Staff
at The Stuff Printing Concern, under the Sign of the
'Dollar Mark' at Seattle, U.S.A. ¶ Of these Songs but a
limited number have been printed and the types distributed.



Why should we ridicule—think very droll,
Esquimaux legends, or carved Totem Pole,
When we in blindness are fully as odd
In misconceptions of Life and of God?



